

This impressive structure, home of Headquarters, Fifth U.S. Army, has played a prestigious role in the history of the Army. Within the State of Texas, the Quadrangle is surpassed in historical significance only by the Alamo, cradle of Texas liberty. In 1975, the Quadrangle was officially designated a historical landmark. A plaque identifying it as such now stands near the entrance to the sally port.

In 1876, construction was begun on the southeast corner of the structure. The land to accommodate the edifice was donated to the War Department by the City of San Antonio between 1870-1875. The building was originally planned as a supply depot rather than a fortification. Its purpose was to safely store supplies and equipment for issue to posts and units in the region. Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs strongly influenced the architectural design, particularly of the tower.

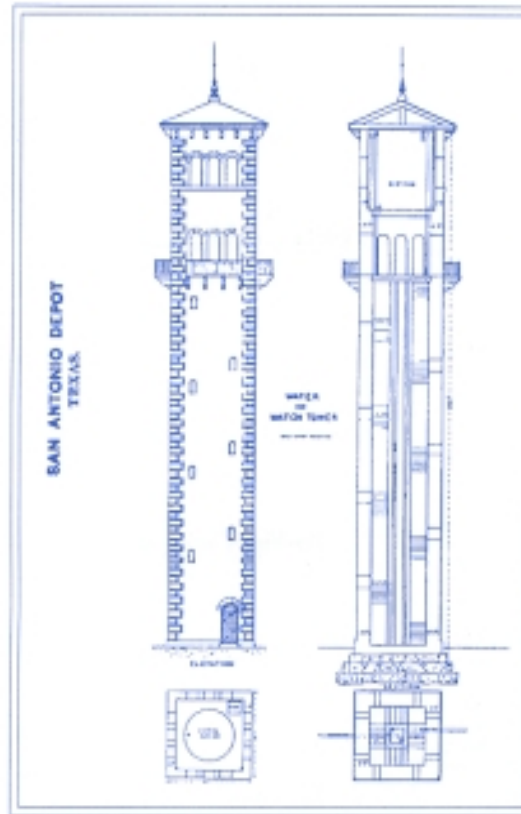
## CONSTRUCTION

The depot was constructed as a hollow square, 624 feet by 624 feet, with storerooms situated along the east and west sides. Additional storerooms were situated along the south, with office space on the second story in the center of the structure. The main entrance to the building was designed as an archway or sally port in the center of the south side. Along the north wall were blacksmith and wheelwright shops. Corrals and sheds for wagons were beyond the north wall.



Access to the storerooms was through large doors on the courtyard side. Exterior walls were perforated with small windows for ventilation, not for shooting as is commonly speculated.

In July of 1878, plans were approved for modification of the Quadrangle, the intent was to increase the amount of office space to accommodate the Headquarters, Department of Texas. This project, completed in 1879, extended the second story above the entire southern side.



## THE TOWER

At the center of the courtyard stands the imposing tower, 15 feet by 15 feet and 90 feet tall. Its dual purpose was to provide a watchman's station and a 7,500-gallon cistern for water.

In 1882, the tower was modified when there was no longer a need for a cistern. A clock was installed by Bell and Brothers. The clock face initially set only on the southern side. The dark-colored disk was mounted in front

of the uppermost windows. In 1907, this clock was replaced by one produced by Seth Thomas. It is still in use. This one differs from the first in that it has a light-colored face, is recessed into the tower and is visible on all four sides.

## EXPANSION/MODERNIZATION

As time passed, the Quadrangle underwent various changes that gradually transformed the Quartermaster Depot into a headquarters complex.

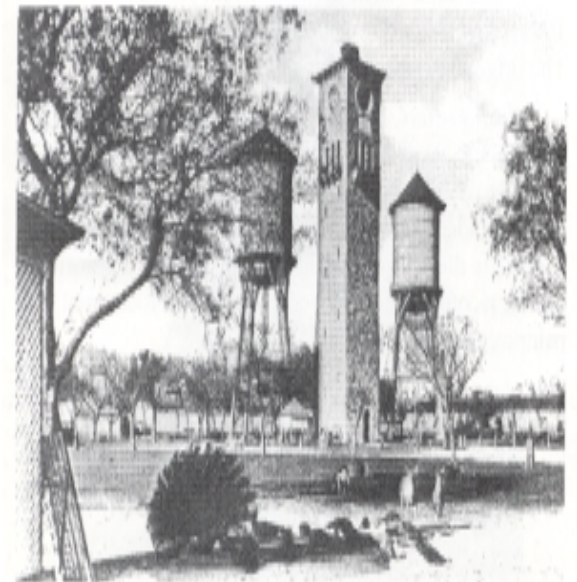
After the turn of the century, many of the small windows along the exterior wall were enlarged to complement the windows of the original office spaces. This permitted more light to access this former storeroom area. The large doors along the interior walls were replaced with regular-size doors and windows were added alongside.

Two water fountains on the interior grounds were removed in 1885 and a duck pond substituted. Water storage was accomplished by building steel tanks beyond the tower. The first receptacle lasted from 1903-1914. The second and third tanks, built in 1904 and 1911, were removed in 1984.

As supply activities for units located along the Mexican border increased, a few temporary buildings were erected inside the Quadrangle.

An office for the commanding general was built above the southeast corner of the building in 1915. Its first occupant was General Fredrick Funston.

In 1916, a Quartermaster office was built in the northwest corner and telegraph office in the southwest corner.





By the outbreak of the First World War in 1917, both the headquarters and the supply activities had outgrown the Quadrangle. Subsequently, after the war, a new complex of warehouses was built east of New Braunfels Avenue to house the supply activities. The headquarters became the sole occupant of the Quadrangle.

No major changes occurred during the Second World War. But following the war, the second story arcade was closed in to facilitate air conditioning.

Modifications such as the new roof placed in 1991-1992, have focused on preserving the historic character. The original type standing-seam metal was used.

Headquarters, Fifth U.S. Army, in residence in the Quadrangle since 1971, initiated a refurbishment of the entire second floor above the sally port in 1993. Renovations included floor-to-ceiling windows to more fully appreciate the view, chandeliers carpeting and a historical exhibit recounting the history of Fort Sam Houston in paintings and photographs.

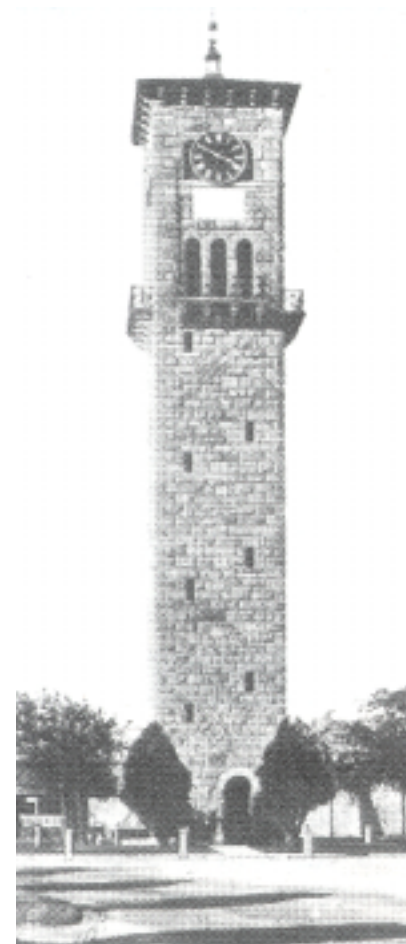
## QUADRANGLE FACTS

- The Quadrangle served as headquarters for the Third, Fourth and Fifth Armies. They occupied it in that order making it the only place headquartering three consecutively numbered armies.
- The "Quadrangle Oak" has a trunk span of 14 feet, 9 inches. It was selected as the second most historic tree in the area in 1976 by the San Antonio Bicentennial Committee.
- Scenes from the movie "Wings," the first motion picture to receive the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1927, were filmed inside the Quadrangle and under the sally port.
- At least seven officers, who had offices in the Quadrangle, became Army Chief of Staff and one became the 34th President of the United States -- Dwight David Eisenhower.
- The inscription below the clock on the tower reads, "A.D. 1876. IN PEACE, PREPARE FOR WAR."
- The Quadrangle encloses an area of more than eight acres. There is an acre and a half of office space inside.
- General "Black Jack" Pershing's office was situated on the eastern end of the second story of the Quadrangle.



General  
"Black Jack" Pershing

- The last commander in the Quadrangle to have fought in the Indian Wars was Major General Thomas Q. Donaldson (1928).
- From 1885-1891, the official weather station for the San Antonio area was in the Quadrangle. At that time, the city did not have a Weather Bureau.
- Brigadier General David S. Stanley had the longest tenure of all of those who served in the Quadrangle as commander, 1884-1892.



# THE QUADRANGLE